

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMCONSUL KADUNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2793

INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, NI

SUBJECT: AGITATION FOR NEW STATES IN NORTH CENTRAL

1. RECENT SKETCHY NEWS ARTICLES IN DAILY TIMES AND NEW NIGERIAN REPORTED TOP NORTH CENTRAL STATE OFFICIALS WERE INTERROGATED FOR WRITING ANONYMOUS LETTERS AGITATING FOR MORE STATES. EPISODE WAS MERELY TOP OF ICEBERG OF DISSATISFACTION AMONG NCS ELEMENTS.

2. ANONYMOUS LETTERS WENT FURTHER THAN ADVOCATING DIVISION OF NORTH CENTRAL STATE INTO TWO STATES CONFORMING TO KATSINA AND ZARIA PROVINCES. LETTERS WERE FAIRLY ACREMONIOUS IN TONE, ACCUSED KATSINA DOMINATED STATE GOVERNMENT OF FAVORING KATSINA AND IGNORING NEEDS OF REST OF STATE AND CALLED FOR REMOVAL OF SMG GARBA JA ABDULKADIR AND CHAIRMAN, PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, NCS, ISA KAITA. KATSINA GROUP ANSWERED IN KIND.

3. OFFICIALS CALLED IN FOR QUESTIONING WERE NUHU BAMALI, CHAIRMAN, KADUNA LOCAL AUTHORITY (FORMER NCS COMMISSIONER AND ONE TIME FEDERAL COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS); ABBAS DABO SAMBO, PERMSEC FINANCE;
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MUHAMMADU IBRAHIM, PERMSEC INFORMATION; AND SANI SAMBO,

SECRETARY, KADUNA CAPITAL BOARD. ALL ARE FROM ZARIA PROVINCE AND ALL DENIED KNOWLEDGE OF ANY CONNECTION WITH AUTHORS OR LETTERS. REPORTEDLY BRIG. ABBA KYARI, NCS MIL-GOV, WANTED POLICE TO DETAIN OFFICIALS BUT POLICE FELT EVIDENCE DID NOT SUPPORT ARREST AND RELEASED THEM AFTER INTERROGATION.

4. THERE ARE ACTUALLY THREE FEUDING GROUPS-- KATSINA, NORTHERN ZARIA AND SOUTHERN ZARIA. KATSINA AND NORTHERN ZARIA FACTIONS EACH WANT SEPARATE STATES. PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN ZARIA PROVINCE, LARGELY CHRISTIAN, SEE THEMSELVES AS MOST AGRIEVED PORTION OF STATE, RECEIVING FEWER AMENITIES THAN OTHER PARTS AND NO SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS. AT TIME OF CREATION OF STATES THEY WROTE HEAD OF STATE ASKING TO BE INCLUDED IN BENUE-PLATEAU STATE. SINCE THEN THEY HAVE BECOME FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT THEIR NEEDS ARE IGNORED BY NCS GOVT AND RECENTLY REPEATED THEIR APPEAL TO GOWON TO BE GROUPED WITH BENUE-PLATEAU STATE.

5. COMMENT: NCS GOVERNMENT HAS SO FAR FAIRLY WELL CONTAINED SITUATION AND SAFEGUARDED INFORMATION. VERY FEW PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF WHO WAS INVOLVED OR EXACT CONTENT OF LETTERS. BUT AFFAIR (WHICH STUDIOUSLY IGNORED BY NEW NIGERIAN UNTIL DAILY TIMES CARRIED STORY) REFLECTS ILL WILL WHICH CERTAIN PORTIONS OF STATE FEEL TOWARD OTHERS WHOM THEY SEE AS CONTROLLING AFFAIRS IN THEIR OWN SELFISH INTEREST. THIS SITUATION EXISTS IN OTHER STATES AS WELL, PARTICULARLY NORTH EASTERN AND NORTH WESTERN AND FUELS ARGUMENT FOR MORE STATES. IT ALSO BELIES NORTHERN SOLIDARITY WHICH IS SUBJECT OF SEPARATE AIRGRAM.

TRAIL

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